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Michael E. Piston\*

\*Admitted in the State of Michigan.  
Practice in the State of New York limited  
to the federal courts and administrative  
Agencies

June 2, 2023

USCIS  
Nebraska Service Center  
850 S Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Re: Haroutioun Sahac Bastajian's Form I-140, petition to be classified as an alien with  
extraordinary ability / LIN2290191683 A240937942

**RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR EVIDENCE**

**Mr. Bastajian replies to the indicated requests as follows:**

*Documentation to establish that the beneficiary will continue to work in his claimed area  
of expertise.:*

Enclosed is a letter from the Islamic Association of Greater Detroit confirming that it has  
contracted to have Mr. Bastajian execute the interior artwork and serve as a consultant to aid in  
all design related aspects of its new expanded mosque, Exhibit B at 1-3, together with a copy of  
the contract pertaining to those services, Exhibit B at 4-6. Note that the total fee payable to Mr.  
Bastajian's company is well over \$200,000.

Enclosed also please find a copy of Mr. Bastajian's company's invoice to the Islamic Center of  
America for over \$75,000 of mosque decoration work. Exhibit B at 7-9.

**MICHAEL E. PISTON, ATTORNEY AT LAW**

**To: USCIS**

**RE:** Haroutioun Sahac Bastajian's Form I-140, petition to be classified as an alien with extraordinary ability / LIN2290191683 A240937942

**Dated: June 5, 2023**

*Published material about the alien in professional or major trade publications or other major media, relating to the alien's work in the field for which classification is sought*

Interview of Harout Bastajian by Rania Barghout on October 18, 2015, at MBC (Middle East Broadcasting Center) Studios, for the TV show "Talk of the Town". Interview first broadcasted on the show on the same day, then uploaded to MBC's official website (<http://www.mbc.net/channels/mbcl>) before it was archived, currently found on <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?y=569005964182591&ref=sharing>. An Arabic language transcript and certified English language translation are enclosed. Exhibit B at 10-15.

Television broadcast constitutes "published material" in as much as the ordinary meaning of the word "publish" is "to make known to another or to the public generally" ... Merriam-Webster, <http://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/publish> (last visited Aug. 2, 2016) (defining "publish"). *Kirvard E. Div., Inc. v. Antero Res. Corp.*, No. 2:15-cv-633, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 196184, at \*23-24 (S.D. Ohio Aug. 9, 2016). It is by-lined because the interviewer's name appears both verbally and in writing (in Arabic) in the broadcast. Exhibit B at 10.

Where a statutory term "is not defined in the statute, ... 'we give the term its ordinary meaning.'" *Encino Motorcars, LLC v. Navarro*, 138 S. Ct. 1134, 1140 (2018), quoting *Taniguchi v. Kan Pacific Saipan, Ltd.*, 566 U. S. 560, 566 (2012). It is appropriate to look to dictionaries to determine words ordinary meanings. See, e.g. *Matter of M--- F--- W*, 24 I. & N. Dec. 633, 636, nt.4 (B.I.A. October 6, 2008), *Matter of Rojas*, 23 I & N Dec. 117, 133 (BIA 2011) (relies upon Webster's dictionary for ordinary meaning of terms), *United States v. TRW Rifle 7.62x51mm Caliber*, 447 F.3d 686, 689 (9th Cir. 2006) ("Congress did not define what it meant by 'readily' or 'restored' in § 5845(b); "thus, we follow the common practice of consulting dictionary definitions to clarify their ordinary meaning[]").

Further, and in any event, it is well accepted by no less an authority than the U.S. Supreme Court that posting a video online constitutes its publication. "When North Carolina published some of Allen's videos and photos online, Allen sued for copyright infringement". *Allen v. Cooper*, 140 S. Ct. 994, 997 (2020) .

So does the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, the court of appeals with jurisdiction over the plaintiff's residence: "Carpenter is a creator and leader of ATP, which publishes newsletters and videos documenting ISIS military successes and celebrating the "coming fall and collapse of the American empire." *United States v. Carpenter*, No. 22-5933, 2023 U.S. App. LEXIS 2386, at \*7 (6th Cir. Jan. 30, 2023). In fact, the 8<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals, with jurisdiction over the state of Nebraska, considers any playing of a video, including one containing an interview, its publication: "During her testimony, over Counts's objection, the government introduced the video recording of Fries's forensic interview with M.D. The recording was published to the jury." *United States v. Counts*, 39 F.4th 539, 542 (8th Cir. 2022). See also Allen sues Defendants

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for defamation arising out of TRT World's July 15, 2019 broadcast of a television program titled "A Night of Defiance: Interview with Mary Addi" (hereinafter, "the Broadcast"). Compl. ¶¶ 6, 22; Ansr. ¶¶ 6, 22. A copy of the broadcast was also published on YouTube.<sup>4</sup> See also *Allen v. Addi*, Civil Action No. 20-cv-01650 (TSC), 2021 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 180476, at \*3 (D.D.C. Sep. 22, 2021). ("According to Allen, 'TRT World has millions of viewers and as of 7/13/2020, TRT World has around 892,000 subscribers on YouTube.' Compl. ¶ 30. Allen sues Defendants for defamation arising out of TRT World's July 15, 2019 broadcast of a television program titled "A Night of Defiance: Interview with Mary Addi" (hereinafter, "the Broadcast"). Compl. ¶¶ 6, 22; Ansr. ¶¶ 6, 22. A copy of the broadcast was also published on YouTube.<sup>4</sup> See *id.* According to Allen, "TRT World has millions of viewers and as of 7/13/2020, TRT World has around 892,000 subscribers on YouTube." Compl. ¶ 30.).

Further, according to Allied Media Corp.:

Ten Year Pioneer, MBC is the leading free-to-air, pan-Arab, news and entertainment channel. MBC's guiding philosophy has always been to lead and innovate. Satellite transmission first started from London in September 1991, making MBC the first-ever, independent Arabic satellite TV station and a market leader, delivering news and quality, family entertainment programming to more than 130 million Arabic speaking people around the world. MBC has recently moved its headquarters to Dubai Media City, enabling the whole production process to be closer to its Arab viewers. The centre has been described as one of the new wonders of the satellite transmission world.

Exhibit B at 16-17.

Accordingly, MBC certainly qualifies as "major media". Therefore the record shows that Mr. Bastajian was the subject of a by-lined publication by a major media source.

*Evidence of the display of the alien's work in the field at artistic exhibitions or showcases.*

We have enclosed another letter from Dr. Abouali affirming "that Mr. Bastajian's art is displayed in a manner consistent with, and for the purpose of, artistic exhibitions", Exhibit B at 18, together with pictures of his work as displayed. Exhibit B at 19-22. Please note that the Arabic language script contained in the photographs are included as examples of the art of calligraphy and not to convey information. Thus no translation is required.

*Evidence that the alien has performed in a leading or critical role for organizations or establishments that have a distinguished reputation.*

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Enclosed is a letter from the Former Chairman of the Executive Board of the Islamic Center of America, stating that "Harout Bastajian played an unequivocally critical role in the design, execution and opening of the Islamic Center of America in Dearborn, MI." Further, he states that:

Harout's responsibilities were abundant, yet specific. He led the execution of all artwork, calligraphy and patina in the hallways, prayer rooms, banquet halls, interior doors, walls, soffits, domes, mezzanine, etc., His leadership included teams of skilled artists, painters, calligraphers and volunteers. Upon completion of this work, we, the Board of Directors at the Islamic Center of America, presented to Harout a distinguished honor for which he shared with only the 4 or 5 leading individuals who were responsible with the completion of our historic mosque. His plaque hangs in our hall of honor.

Exhibit B at 23.

As noted in the petition, the Islamic Center of America is America's oldest Shia Mosque and the largest Muslim Mosque of any denomination in the United States. It was described by the Detroit News as a "landmark". That certainly makes it distinct from other mosques in the U.S., as well as eminent, and, so, distinguished.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, we provide herewith a letter from Farid Nasser, MD, Chairman, Board of Trustees, The Islamic Center of America explaining that:

Over the years, Washington has recognized the Islamic Center of America for its religious, educational and public programs and as a place of moderate patriotic views and positive influence on our society here and abroad. Communications and relationship with the ICA began with President Jimmy Carter's Administration during the hostage crisis and continued with most White House Administrations thereafter every time issues and crises erupt in the Middle East. The ICA hosted US Senators, US Presidents' advisors and envoys as well as delegations from the German Federal Parliament.

In the past and for a decade, the US State Department and National Defense University brought yearly over 70 officers delegates from all over the world to the Islamic Center of America to marvel at the unique architecture and calligraphy and to learn, dialogue and

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<sup>1</sup> We disagree that to be distinguished one must have "eminence, distinction *and* excellence". In fact, the ordinary meaning of the word is "eminence, distinction *or* excellence". "Distinguished." Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/distinguished>. Accessed 29 May. 2023 (emphasis added).



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get their questions answered. In addition, The ICA hosts weekly delegates from schools, universities, and interfaith from within and outside the State of Michigan, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Exhibit A at 38.

Certainly this marks the Islamic Center of America as "distinguished"

*Establishing eligibility for the high level of expertise required for the E11 immigrant classification is based on your possessing sustained national or international acclaim (achieved in the past and maintained up to the present) and achievements that have been recognized in the field of expertise, indicating that you are one of that small percentage who have risen to the very top of the field of endeavor.*

As indicated in our original petition, "Mr. Bastajian is one of the leading professionals of a field unique to the Islamic World -the use of Arabic calligraphy to decorate religious buildings." Hashim al-Tawil, a Tenured Professor and Chair of Art History Department at Henry Ford College in Dearborn, Michigan.

Mr. Bastajian is a "world renowned artist" in the field of mosque decoration. Diana Abouali, PhD, Director, Arab American National Museum.

To this we now add the following letters reaffirming that Mr. Bastajian is one of the small percentage of artists who has risen to the very top of this field:

Ron Amen, Former Chairman, Executive Board Islamic Center of America, Exhibit B at 23 ("Harout Bastajian is the leading mosque decorator in the world").

Dr. Nadia M. Bazy, Director Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs, University of Michigan, Exhibit B at 24 ("one of the world's most talented artists in his field of mosque decoration, or arguably the most talented here in the US and abroad").

Michael Makki Managing Director, Village Private Equity Managing Member, Light USA and AF Inc, Exhibit B at 25 ("Harout is the best mosque decorator currently residing in the United States of America.").

We also refer you to an article from the Arab-American News describing him as the "Michaelangelo of Mosques". <https://arabamericannews.com/2023/05/25/local-artist-recognized->

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for-his-contribution-to-the-promotion-of-islamic-culture-through-art/ (last accessed June 2, 2023).

Finally, 8 CFR 204.5(h)(3) provides that "A petition for an alien of extraordinary ability must be accompanied by evidence that the alien has sustained national or international acclaim and that his or her achievements have been recognized in the field of expertise. Such evidence shall include evidence of a one-time achievement (that is, a major, international recognized award), or at least three of the following:"

Therefore each of the criteria listed in 8 CFR 204.5(h)(3) constitutes "acclaim". In addition to that previously submitted and mentioned above, we include the following additional evidence of Mr. Bastajian's sustained national and international acclaim:

Letter from Dr. Nassib Fawaz, President of the Lebanese International Business Council, Exhibit B at 26.

Letter from Najah Bazzy Founder & CEO Zaman International - Hope for Humanity Michiganian of the Year 2020 Crain's Top 100 Most Influential Women 2021 Michigan Women's Hall of Fame 2020 CNN Hero 2019, Exhibit A at 27-28.

Letter from Fr. George Shalhoub, the head priest of St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church in Livonia, Michigan. Exhibit B at 29.

Letter from Ty Safaryan (Owner of Twins Buick GMC.) Exhibit at 30.

Letter from Rabbi Areyah Kaitmann Chabad Columbus executive Director, Life Town and Kitchen of Life. Exhibit at 31.

WXYZ<sup>2</sup> Report, Exhibit A at 32-36.

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**2**

WXYZ is a "*GREAT DETROIT BROADCASTING LEGEND*". Jim Feliciano, Motor City Radio Flashbacks, "A SALUTE TO A DETROIT RADIO BROADCAST LEGEND: WXYZ-AM 1270", A SALUTE TO A DETROIT RADIO BROADCAST LEGEND: WXYZ-AM 1270 – Motor City Radio Flashbacks (mcrfb.com) (last accessed June 5, 2023).

***Continued in the footer of the next page.***

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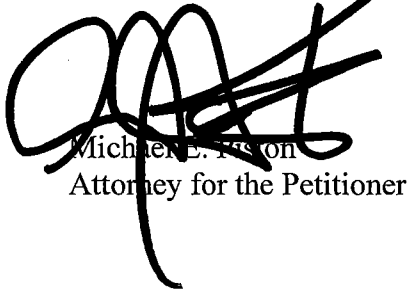
**Dated: June 5, 2023**

Certificate of United States Special Senatorial Recognition, Exhibit A at 37.

The evidence of such acclaim submitted herewith covers a period of 2015-2022. Therefore it constitutes evidence of "sustained" acclaim, and because it comes from such diverse locations as Lebanon and the United States, it is "international". Further, according to Merriam-Webster's online dictionary the ordinary meaning of acclaim is "praise", "Acclaim." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/acclaim>. Accessed 29 May. 2023., and the many newspaper articles submitted with the petition covering the same time period are all highly laudatory of Mr. Bastajian. Accordingly, the evidence submitted herewith establishes that he is among the small percentage who have risen to the very top of his field of the decoration of religious buildings and has achieved sustained international acclaim in that area.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that he be classified as an alien with extraordinary ability under Section 203(a)(1)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Thank you for close attention to this important matter.



Michael E. Piston  
Attorney for the Petitioner



January 13, 2023

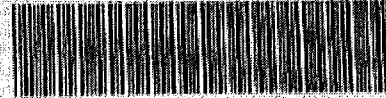
HAROUTIOUN SAHAC BASTAJIAN  
c/o HAROUTIOUN BASTAJIAN  
5 MILLRACE CT  
DEARBORN, MI 48126

RE: HAROUTIOUN SAHAC BASTAJIAN  
I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker

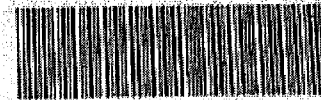
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
P.O. Box 82521  
Lincoln, NE 68501-2521



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services



LIN2290191683



A240-937-942

**REQUEST FOR EVIDENCE**

**IMPORTANT: THIS NOTICE CONTAINS YOUR UNIQUE NUMBER. THE ORIGINAL NOTICE MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE REQUESTED EVIDENCE.**

You are receiving this notice because U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requires additional evidence to process your form. Please provide the evidence requested below. Include duplicate copies if you are requesting consular notification.

**Your response must be received in this office by April 10, 2023.**

Please note that you have been allotted the maximum period allowed for responding to a Request for Evidence (RFE). The time period for responding cannot be extended. 8 Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR) 103.2(b)(8)(iv). Because many immigration benefits are time sensitive, you are encouraged to respond to this request as early as possible, but no later than the deadline provided above. If you do not respond to this notice within the allotted time, your case may be denied. The regulations do not provide for an extension of time to submit the requested evidence.

You must submit all requested evidence at the same time. If you submit only some of the requested evidence, USCIS will consider your response a request for a decision on the record. See 8 CFR 103.2(b)(11).

If you submit a document in any language other than English, the document must be accompanied by a full and complete English translation. The translator must certify that the translation is accurate and he or she is competent to translate from that language to English. If you submit a foreign language translation in response to this request for evidence, you must also include a copy of the foreign language document.

Processing of your I-140 will resume upon receipt of your response. If you have not heard from USCIS within 60 days of responding, you may contact the USCIS Contact Center at 1-800-375-5283. If you are hearing impaired, please call the USCIS Contact Center TDD at 1-800-767-1833.



Reference is made to this Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker, which you filed on April 18, 2022. You seek to classify yourself as an employment-based immigrant in accordance with Section 203(b)(1)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

You intend to work as a skilled technical artist in the field of mosque decoration.

*Documentation to establish that the beneficiary will continue work in his or her claimed area of expertise.*

You must show how you will continue working in the United States in the claimed area of expertise. The record does not demonstrate that you have prearranged commitments for working in this field. Therefore, please submit evidence that you are coming to the United States to continue working in the field in which you claim to have garnered sustained national or international acclaim. Evidence that may be submitted to satisfy this requirement includes, but is not limited to, letters from current or prospective employers, employment contracts, evidence from you detailing plans on *how* you intend to continue work in the United States, and other objective and detailed evidence and/or correspondence.

The E11 immigrant classification applies to individuals with extraordinary ability in the sciences, arts, education, business, or athletics. The individual must demonstrate that he has sustained national or international acclaim and that his achievements have been recognized in the field of expertise, indicating that he is one of that small percentage who have risen to the very top of the field of endeavor. The individual must plan to continue work in his area of extraordinary ability and must substantially benefit prospectively the United States.

To process the petition and determine if you are eligible, additional information is required. This request provides suggested evidence that you may submit to satisfy each requested item. You may submit one, some, or all of these items. Or you may choose to submit none of them and instead submit other evidence to satisfy the request. You may also explain why or how the evidence in the record already establishes eligibility. Please note, however, that you are responsible for providing evidence that best shows that you meet all requirements. The evidence must show that you were eligible for the requested benefit when you filed the Form I-140.

A two-part analysis is used to determine whether you are an individual of extraordinary ability:

First, we determine whether you have submitted evidence to show that you received a one-time achievement (a major, internationally recognized award) or qualify under at least three of the 10 criteria required for this classification.

Second, if you establish that you received a one-time achievement (a major, internationally recognized award) or meet at least three of the criteria, we then determine whether you have submitted evidence that you have sustained national or international acclaim (i.e., achieved acclaim in the past and thereafter have maintained a comparable level of acclaim up to the present) and have achievements that have been recognized in the field of expertise, indicating that you are one of that small percentage who have risen to the very top of the field of endeavor.

You submitted documentation under the following regulatory criteria:

(iii) Published material about the alien in professional or major trade publications or other major media, relating to the alien's work in the field for which classification is sought. Such



evidence shall include the title, date, and author of the material, and any necessary translation.

(vii) Evidence of the display of the alien's work in the field at artistic exhibitions or showcases.

(viii) Evidence that the alien has performed in a leading or critical role for organizations or establishments that have a distinguished reputation.

A discussion follows addressing the areas of insufficiency and what can be submitted to overcome them.

You submitted translations that the translator does not certify as "complete and accurate" or that they are competent to translate from the foreign language into English in accordance with 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(b)(3). Because you did not submit properly certified translations of documents, you do not demonstrate that the evidence supports your claims.

*(iii) Published material about the alien in professional or major trade publications or other major media, relating to the alien's work in the field for which classification is sought. Such evidence shall include the title, date, and author of the material, and any necessary translation.*

You submitted foreign language documents whose translations were not properly certified—see above.

In order for published material to meet 8 C.F.R. § 204.5(h)(3)(iii), it must be about you and relate to your work in the field, including a substantial discussion of the person's work in the field, and, as stated in the regulation, be published "in professional or major trade publications or other major media" and "shall include the title, date, and author of the material, and any necessary translation." To qualify as major media, the publication should have significant national or international distribution with circulation (online or in print) or viewership high compared with other statistics. As such, you would not earn acclaim at the national level from a local publication or website with low viewership.

You provided articles from *Dearborn Press & Guide*, *Faith and Form*, *Your Community Voice*, et al. However, you have not provided evidence that these publications are considered professional or major trade publications or other major media.

Additionally, you provided a transcript of a television interview. However, television interviews are not published material, are not subject to editorial review, lack objectivity, and therefore will not meet this criterion. Accordingly, this evidence does not meet the plain language of this criterion.

To assist in determining that a publication qualifies as a professional or major trade publication or other major media, you may submit evidence indicating:

- publication name as well as the title, date and author of the published article
- URL address on each page of screenshots
- its circulation (online and/or in print) and comparative circulation data of major publications in the field
- the intended audience of a publication

Note that the evidence submitted should be specific to the media format in which it was published. If material was published online, the evidence should relate to the website. If it was published in print, the evidence should relate to the printed publication.



*(vii) Evidence of the display of the alien's work in the field at artistic exhibitions or showcases.*

You submitted evidence in the form of a letter from Dr. Diana Abouali (Director at Arab American National Museum) supporting that work that you produced is on display at said museum, but there is no clear evidence that your work is actually displayed in a manner consistent with, and for the purpose of, "artistic exhibitions or showcases." Please provide clear objective evidence that your work is on display in a manner consistent with, and for the purpose of, "artistic exhibitions or showcases."

*(viii) Evidence that the alien has performed in a leading or critical role for organizations or establishments that have a distinguished reputation.*

For a leading role, we look at whether the evidence establishes that the person is, or was, a leader within the organization or establishment or a division or department thereof. For a critical role, we look at whether the evidence establishes that the person has contributed in a way that is of significant importance to the outcome of the organization or establishment's activities or those of a division or department of the organization or establishment. *6 USCIS Policy Manual F.2 appendix*, <https://www.uscis.gov/policymanual>

In support of this criterion, you submitted certificates, contract information, etc. You also submitted letters of experience from Dr. Walid Harb (Chairman at The Islamic Center of America), Dr. Hashim Al-Tawil (Professor at Henry Ford College), et al. who primarily describe your past works and accomplishments in the field of mosque decoration and your work with calligraphy, etc., but do not provide detailed and probative information that specifically addresses how your role was leading or critical for their organization.

To assist in determining that you performed in a leading or critical role for a division or department of the organization or establishment, please submit letters from high-level executive officers with personal knowledge of the significance of your leading or critical role. The letters should contain detailed and probative information (including dates of employment) which specifically addresses how your role for an organization or establishment was leading or critical. Details should include your specific tasks and accomplishments as compared with other skilled technical artists. Evidence under this criterion must provide specifics relating to how your role was leading or critical for an organization or establishment. The letters should include the name, address, and title of the writer.

Furthermore, the evidence must establish that the organization or establishment for which you claim to have performed a leading or critical role has a distinguished reputation. To assist in determining that an organization or establishment has a distinguished reputation, you must submit documentation of its eminence, distinction, and excellence.

As discussed above, you did not receive a one-time achievement award or meet at least three of the 10 criteria. As such, we are affording you the opportunity to submit additional evidence to establish that you meet the regulatory criteria. The response to this request should address the insufficiencies articulated by us in this request.

Additionally, merely meeting the minimum regulatory criteria outlined above will not establish eligibility for the E11 immigrant classification. Any evidence submitted in response to this request should also articulate how the evidence establishes that you possess the required high level of expertise for the E11 immigrant classification.

This is your opportunity to articulate further details or provide additional evidence in regards to how



the evidence submitted in the initial filing or in response to this request for evidence (RFE) establishes that you meet the requirements regarding the required high level of expertise for the immigrant classification.

Establishing eligibility for the high level of expertise required for the E11 immigrant classification is based on your possessing sustained national or international acclaim (achieved in the past and maintained up to the present) and achievements that have been recognized in the field of expertise, indicating that you are one of that small percentage who have risen to the very top of the field of endeavor.

In conclusion, when ultimately making a final decision regarding eligibility, we will first evaluate the evidence submitted by you to determine which regulatory criteria you meet in part one of the analysis. If you establish that you received a one-time achievement (a major, internationally recognized award) or meet at least three of the antecedent evidentiary prongs, then we will evaluate all of the evidence in the record to make a final merits determination of whether or not you, by a preponderance of the evidence, have demonstrated that you have sustained national or international acclaim and that your achievements have been recognized in the field of expertise, indicating that you are one of that small percentage who have risen to the very top of the field of endeavor.

This is your opportunity to meet your legal burden of proof to establish eligibility in all respects. Whenever any person makes an application for an immigration benefit, he shall bear the burden of proof to establish eligibility for the benefit sought. Therefore, you must prove, by a preponderance of the evidence, in other words, that it is more likely than not, that you are fully qualified for the benefit sought. Accordingly, the decision will be based on the initial evidence submitted upon filing and all additional evidence submitted in response to this request.

**PLACE THIS ENTIRE LETTER ON TOP OF YOUR RESPONSE. SUBMISSION OF EVIDENCE WITHOUT THIS LETTER WILL DELAY PROCESSING OF YOUR CASE AND MAY RESULT IN A DENIAL. PLEASE USE THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE TO MAIL THE ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE REQUESTED BACK TO THIS OFFICE.**

Sincerely,



L. Miller  
Director  
Officer: 0624





In the Name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

## Islamic Association of Greater Detroit



February 17, 2023

Dear US Citizenship and Immigration Services,

My name is Dr. Ghaus Malik, one of the original founders of the Islamic Association of Greater Detroit located in Rochester Hills, Michigan. Please let this letter serve as evidence for the criticality and uniqueness of Mr. Harout Bastajian's completed, current and future committed work for our mosque and the multiple communities it serves. Attached you will find a brief overview of the IAGD and what we represent (see IAGD Values).

We, at the Islamic Association of Greater Detroit (IAGD) have been undergoing an expansion from 39,000 to 93,000 square feet since 2018. When completed, our new mosque will be one of the largest in North America. We have raised many millions to build a mosque that will service thousands of people in the Greater Detroit area. You can see progress as of December 2022 at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TM0pC0ZnutE> and <https://iagd.net/expansion/>

During our planning stages, we were in dire need of not only a well-established and world-renowned Islamic Arts Artist, but someone very experienced with a deep understanding of how

large-scale mosques should be designed, constructed and decorated. We could not find such a person. Fortuitously, after doing some online research and talking to people in our collective networks – we were fortunate to be introduced to Mr. Harout Bastajian. We were made aware of his work executed at the Islamic Center of America in Dearborn, MI and were immediately sold on Harout's unique and extraordinary ability to design mosques.

We have contracted Harout to not only execute the interior artwork, but also serve as a consultant to aid in all design-related aspects of our building. Attached you will find a list of contracted services and products that we Harout is executing for us (see Harout Scope of Work).

**IAGD – Islamic Association of Greater Detroit**

879 West Auburn Road, Rochester Hills, Michigan 48307

Tel: (248) 852-5657

Website: [www.iagd.net](http://www.iagd.net)

Non-Profit Organization IRS (Tax Exempt ID # 38-2219685)

***Exhibit B at 1***



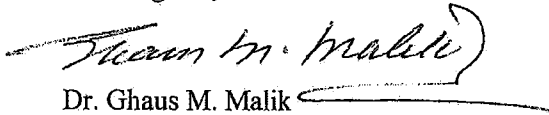
In the Name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

## Islamic Association of Greater Detroit

On behalf of the Islamic Association of Greater Detroit and the many concerned stakeholders, we sincerely petition to the USCIS that Mr. Harout Bastajian be approved of his immigration request so that there are no further interruptions with the contracted work. Unfortunately, we are afraid that if Mr. Harout cannot continue this work, we will be unable to find any replacement within the US or abroad.

If you have any questions or require any additional information – please do not hesitate to contact me further regarding this matter of great importance.

Best Regards,

  
Dr. Ghaus M. Malik

Co-Founder, and Construction Co-ordinator,

Islamic Association of Greater Detroit

ghausmalik1@gmail.com

**IAGD – Islamic Association of Greater Detroit**

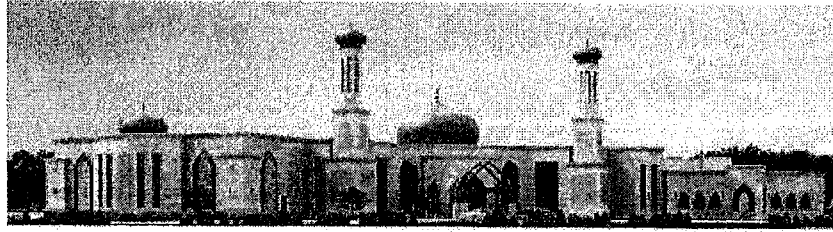
879 West Auburn Road, Rochester Hills, Michigan 48307

Tel: (248) 852-5657

Website: [www.iagd.net](http://www.iagd.net)

Non-Profit Organization IRS (Tax Exempt ID # 38-2219685)

***Exhibit B at 2***



## IAGD VALUES

The Islamic Association of Greater Detroit seeks to facilitate and provide spiritual, educational, and social services to these communities and those abroad. The IAGD hosts a variety of regular prayers and programming for all ages and demographics, throughout the year. Our goal is to properly adapt the teachings of the Islamic faith and provide an opportunity to all people to employ a lifestyle of purpose and good, while working together to ensure we grow together as one unified local and global community.

## HAROUT SCOPE OF WORK

### Total Contracted Cost: \$222,643

Lobby Dome  
Lobby Calligraphy  
Prayer Hall Dome  
Prayer Hall Calligraphy & Geometric  
Design  
Mihrab  
Mihrab Side Walls  
Mezzanine Arches  
Main Prayer Hall Dome Calligraphy Ring  
Mihrab Side Walls Calligraphy  
Lobby Mezzanine Upper Level Calligraphy  
Prayer Hall Exit Calligraphy  
Prayer Hall Window Frames @ Mihrab  
Walls  
Prayer Hall Window Frames  
Prayer Hall Exit Doors  
Prayer Hall Exit Area Circular Ornamental  
Design  
Minbar  
Doors  
1st Floor Arches  
Lobby Column Intersection  
Calligraphy  
Mihrab Walls  
Windows  
Balcony Wall Column  
Upper Soffits U Shape  
Lower Soffits U Shape  
Walls/Sconces Background

**LIGHT U.S.A**  
DECORATIVE ART WORKS



# CONTRACT

**LIGHT USA LLC/AF INC**  
Haroutioun Bastajian

Bill To:

**Islamic Association of Greater Detroit (IAGD)**  
879 W. Auburn  
Rochester Hills, MI 48307

Date: 6/1/2022

Payment Terms: Multiple See Below

Due Date:: Multiple See Below

**Balance Due: \$222,643.00**

Item	Quantity	Rate	Amount
<b>Mezzanine Arches</b>	7	\$3,000.00	\$21,000.00
Blue Patina background same as Mihrab with gilded decorative patterns. Patina frames at two levels (9" x 35")			
<b>Main Prayer Hall Dome Calligraphy Ring</b>	1	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Surat al Nour Gilded Execution			
<b>Mihrab Side Walls Calligraphy</b>	2	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00
Extra Work added to existing design:			
1: Right side Al-Fatiha & Circular Allah on Top			
2: Left Side Al-Kadar & Circular Mohammed on top"			
<b>Lobby Mezzanine Upper Level Calligraphy</b>	65	\$100.00	\$6,500.00
65 Linear Feet			
<b>Prayer Hall Exit Calligraphy</b>	26	\$75.00	\$1,950.00
26 Linear Feet			
<b>Prayer Hall Window Frames @ Mihrab Walls</b>	4	\$750.00	\$3,000.00
7" x 285" Each w/Patina on Frames			
<b>Prayer Hall Window Frames</b>	14	\$250.00	\$3,500.00
9" x 284" Each w/Patina on Frames			
<b>Prayer Hall Exit Doors</b>	2	\$250.00	\$500.00
10" x 275" Each w/Patina on Frames			
<b>Prayer Hall Exit Area Circular Ornamental Design</b>	1	\$500.00	\$500.00
6.3 Feet Diameter			
<b>Lobby Dome</b>	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
<b>Lobby Calligraphy</b>	1	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
<b>Prayer Hall Dome</b>	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
<b>Prayer Hall Calligraphy and Geometric Design</b>	1	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00

*Exhibit B at 4*



<b>Mihrab</b>	1	\$22,000.00	\$22,000.00
<b>Mihrab Side Walls</b>	2	\$12,000.00	\$24,000.00
<b>Minbar Submitted Design and Consulting</b>	1	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
<b>Doors</b>	3	\$250.00	\$750.00
1: Central			
2: Two Sides			
<b>1st Floor Arches</b>	3	\$175.00	\$525.00
1: Left & Right Calligraphy (Vegetal Designs Upper Top)			
2: Central Tribute (Bismillah Upper Top)			
<b>Lobby Column Intersection</b>	1	\$250.00	\$250.00
<b>ALL CALLIGRAPHY CONSULTING AND EXECUTION</b>	1	\$8,668.00	\$8,668.00
Verses: Hashr, Kafiroun, Qadr, Doha, Falak, Nas, Rahman, Ikhlas, Fatiha, Sadaq Allah, Bismallah, Prayer Hall Dome Calligraphy (Nour)			
<b>Decorative Art Works, Patina, Stone &amp; Marble Imitation and Ornaments at the Mihrab Wall, Windows &amp; Balcony Wall Column Background</b>	1	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00
<b>Upper Soffits U Shape: 2 tones of wood finish + decorative</b>	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
patterns on 90 degree edges above wooden columns. Signature decorative patterns on the ceiling spotlight area.			
<b>Lower Soffits U Shape Ceiling Area: 2 tones of wood finish +</b>	1	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00
decorative patterns around spotlight area			
<b>Walls: Stone and marble imitation + ornaments</b>	1	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00
<b>Sconces Background: White marble finish with geometric patterns</b>	1	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Total:			\$222,643.00

## Notes:

Looking forward for transforming the IAGD into a Divine artistic Mosque for the pride of the generations to come. This contract includes all consulting fees and samples for design and flow of mosque. It also includes all time and effort advising your Board, architect and various contractors.

## TERMS, CONDITIONS AND SIGNATURES ON FOLLOWING PAGE

Terms:

In order for our team to deliver the project as promptly and as professionally as possible, and in accordance with our internationally-renowned 25 Year guarantee, we kindly ask you to take into consideration the following:

1. We strongly insist on coordinating with one representative from the Islamic Association of Greater Detroit committee who will be empowered to represent the decisions taken by the committee.
2. Our work will last for centuries, projects we executed two decades ago are still standing perfect with the exact colors since their execution, thus our work is guaranteed against color or design fading for 25 years, this guarantee excludes external leaks and architectural defects that might occur.
3. The studies, designs and colors may vary upon execution because we need to do minor changes to have consistency in the spatial artistic finish.
4. The studies and samples are the property of Light USA, IAGD has no responsibility when refusing the studies or can purchase the studies, the digital drawings, and samples for \$5,000; this can be deducted from the final payment if the contract to hire Light USA to execute the project is signed.
5. Our team will supply and apply moveable scaffolding to the lower calligraphy areas at the lobby and prayer hall, but at the dome area professional scaffolding is a must; it is not included in our quote.
6. The project will be completed in 75 working days around 3 months' period, we will try our best to execute the domes and ceiling within the first 45 days to be able to remove the scaffold from the central area of the prayer hall to allow access to the worshippers, but we can't assure that the prayer hall will be 100% functional.
7. Our working hours are 10 hours per day, 6 days per week, where we need access to work area, electricity outlets, washrooms and a storage area.
8. Detailed studies and preparations for the project need at least one month prior launching the project.
9. We kindly ask to have 40% of the amount settled upon signing the contract, 40% upon completing the domes and the final 20% upon total completion of the project.
10. This quote will expire by July 1st, 2022 unless otherwise agreed



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**Aleem Khan**  
**GC, Islamic Association of Greater Detroit**



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**Harout Bastajian**  
**Light USA/AF Inc.**



**LIGHT U.S.A**  
DECORATIVE ART WORKS

# CONTRACT

Light USA LLC  
Harout Bastajian

# 125  
PAGE 1 of 2

Bill To:

Date: 3/17/2023

Islamic Center of America  
19500 Ford Rd.  
Dearborn, MI 48128

**PHASE 1 GRAND TOTAL: \$21,500**

50% Due Now: \$10,750.00

50% Due Upon Completion \$10,750.00

## Hallway Calligraphy & Frame

		Quantity	Rate	Amount
1.1	Calligraphy: several layers of patina background execution of calligraphy and contouring (does not include custom calligraphy copy). 134 Feet @ \$50/linear foot	134	\$50.00	\$6,700.00
1.2	Hand Painted Frames: Wood Finish patina layers and protective coats; 340 Linear Feet X 7.5/ft	340	\$7.50	\$2,550.00

Total: \$9,250.00

## Wooden Windows & Doors

		Quantity	Rate	Amount
2.1	Window wood inner area priming, painting and several layers of light oak wood finish patina and protective coat.	13	\$350.00	\$4,550.00
2.2	Doors wood inner area priming, painting and several layers of light oak wood finish patina and protective coat.	3	\$400.00	\$1,200.00

Total: \$5,750.00

## Arched Window Frames

		Quantity	Rate	Amount
3.1	Stone and marble imitation finish patina and protective layers	10	\$500.00	\$5,000.00

Total: \$5,000.00

## Exterior Arched Gates

		Quantity	Rate	Amount
4.1	Stone and marble imitation finish patina and protective layers, two circular geometrics hand painted ornaments	2	\$750.00	\$1,500.00

Total: \$1,500.00

**LIGHT U.S.A**  
DECORATIVE ART WORKS



# CONTRACT

# 126

**Light USA LLC**  
Harout Bastajian

Bill To:

**Islamic Center of America**  
19500 Ford Rd.  
Dearborn, MI 48128

Date: 5/17/2023

Payment Terms: \$25,000 Deposit

Due Date: Remaining Upon Completion

PO Number: 126

**Balance Due: \$54,026.00**

Initial Deposit Due Now: \$25,000  
Remaining Due at Completion: \$29,026

## MAIN BANQUET HALL

	Quantity	Rate	Amount
5.1: Podium background wall decorative ornaments hand painted, patina and protective layer including central ICA logo	261	\$35.00	\$9,135.00
5.2: Arched columns decorative ornaments, wood, stone and marble finish hand painted, patina and protective layers	2	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
5.3: Upper soffit Decorative vegetal ornaments on patina background	108	\$50.00	\$5,400.00
5.5: Calligraphy sides of podium, Right (7.5 LF) Left (7.5 LF)	15	\$50.00	\$750.00
5.6: Calligraphy facing podium wall above 2 entrances	39	\$50.00	\$1,950.00
5.7: Frame for calligraphy wood or stone imitation	125	\$5.00	\$625.00
		Total:	\$20,860.00

## LEFT/RIGHT BANQUET HALLS (X2)

	Quantity	Rate	Amount
6/7.1: Podium background wall decorative ornaments hand painted, patina and protective layer including central ICA logo	100	\$35.00	\$3,500.00
6/7.2: Arched columns decorative ornaments, wood, stone and marble finish hand painted, patina and protective layers	2	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
6/7.3: Upper soffit Decorative vegetal ornaments on patina background	142	\$50.00	\$7,100.00
6/7.6: Calligraphy sides of podium, Right (23.4 LF) Left (18.6LF)	42	\$50.00	\$2,100.00
6/7.7: Frame for calligraphy wood or stone imitation	90	\$5.00	\$450.00
		Total:	\$16,150.00

Total X2: \$32,300.00

+ CALLIGRAPHY: \$866.00

**Balance Due: \$54,026.00**

## TERMS & CONDITIONS

Dear Board Member,

In order for our team to deliver the project as promptly and as professionally as possible, and in accordance with our internationally-renowned 25 Year guarantee, we kindly ask you to take into consideration the following:


1. We strongly insist on coordinating with only one representative from the Islamic Center of America committee who will be empowered to represent the decisions taken by the committee. **Please identify this main point of contact below.**
2. Our work will last for centuries, projects we executed two decades ago are still standing perfect with the exact colors since their execution, thus our work is guaranteed against color or design fading for 25 years, this guarantee excludes external leaks and architectural defects that might occur.
3. The studies, designs and colors may vary upon execution because we need to do minor changes to have consistency in the spatial artistic finish.
4. All studies and samples are the property of Light USA. If desired, they can be purchased for an agreed amount to be determined at a later point in time.
5. Our team will supply and apply moveable scaffolding
6. Our working hours are 8 hours per day, 6 days per week, where we need access to work area, electricity outlets, washrooms and a storage area.
7. Detailed studies and preparations for the project need at least one month prior launching the project.
8. **We kindly ask to have \$25,000 settled upon signing the contract and the remaining \$29,026 due within 7 days after completion of the job**

Best Regards,

Harout Bastajian

5/17/2023


The undersigned agree to all terms and conditions set forth in this contract:



Name: FARID NASSER Board Member, Islamic Center of America, CHAIRMAN

Main Point of Contact: F. NASSER

Phone: 313 610 4400 Email: FARID0803@Gmail.com

  
**Dolly Namroud Tahed**  
Sworn Translator • Traductrice Assermentée  
مترجمة محلفة لدى المحاكم



Mobile +961 76 73 00 72  
e-mail dollytahed61@gmail.com  
Lebanon, Keserwan,  
Achkout, St. Jhon St reet

0mins 10 sec

[Introduction music plays]

[Clapping]

Graphics: Rania Barghout

Rania Barghout: It is interesting to see a non-Muslim artist that likes the design of Islamic mosques. This is the case of the Lebanese Interior Architect Harout Bastajian, who is considered an expert in the interior design and drawing, one of the best in the Middle East, the United States, and Africa. What attracted him to that art form, and what has it given him in his life? Let us find out.

[Report begins]

VO: He took to the artistic expression of colors and shapes since he was young, which led him to become a standout artist, grabbing the attention and appreciation of many thanks to his work in the interior decoration of many mosques across the Middle East, the United States, and Africa.

Harout VO: I studied interior decoration, with emphasis on mosque studies. The first mosque I worked on is the Baha' Al Din Al Hariri mosque in Saida, and since then, my main attention has become mosques, and till now I've done 35 domes and half-domes in many mosques across the world and in Lebanon.

Graphics: Harout Bastajian – Interior Architect and Mosque Designer

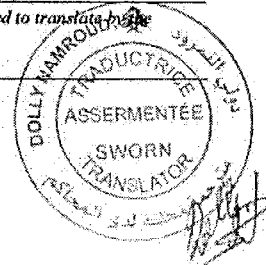
Harout VO: After I have done the first mosque, I found a large appreciation to the Islamic Art, in the details of the art itself, the calligraphy, everything related to the Islamic Art and its mosques, and continued down that lane to find great success.

VO: His beginnings were through coincidence when he designed his first mosque. The project stood out and found great success in its architectural style and historical artistic choices, creating a beautiful, incarnate design, which was followed by multiple other projects, the latest of which was the design of the Rifai Mosque in South Lebanon.


Harout VO: In this mosque here, the Imam Al Rifai Mosque in Tyr, we worked with the Holy Quran Verses and included them in the Domes and Mezzanine designs, we also worked on wall aging illusion techniques, as well as Islamic-specific decorations, and the use of gold paper, including all the details you can see and on which the people behind me are working.

VO: What then made him keep working on Islamic Art and Mosques?  
[Applause]

True and accurate translation of the attached text written in Arabic. Translator is officially accredited to translate by the  
Ministry of Justice, decree no. 1483, on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Translated on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023





 *Dolly Namroud Fahed*  
Sworn Translator • Traductrice Assermentée  
مترجمة محلفة لدى المحاكم

Mobile: +961 76 73 00 72  
e-mail: dollyfahed61@gmail.com  
Lebanon, Keserwan,  
Achkout, St. Jhon Street

Rania Barghout: Mr. Harout, welcome to our program. I will start with the question we heard in the report, what attracted you to the Islamic Mosques Arts and design?

Graphics: Harout Bastajian – Interior Architect and Mosque Designer

Harout: I first had no idea about the Islamic Art, except for courses I took at the university. I used to see these lines, these details in the calligraphy and Arabic fonts, these beautiful lines, and used to see them as drawings more than words. And then over time, and through projects I worked on, I started to find myself being drawn to them, and started seeing how deep of meanings they hold, and how much a person themselves can evolve and improve in the Islamic Art industry, and even improve the art form itself over time and towards the future.

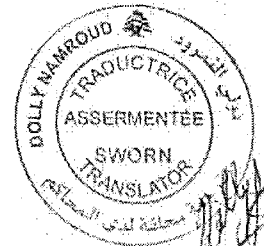
Elham Wajdi: I am with you 100%, I don't see at all a religion to arts, I find that art is art. Your background isn't Muslim, your personal culture doesn't contain the same words or language, do you do any research, do you search certain sources, to understand what you're drawing, or even do you investigate the culture of the thing you're working on itself before designing and drawing the mosque?

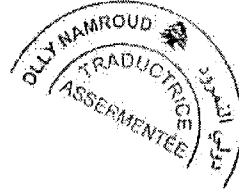
Harout: Nothing comes by luck. Every detail needs studying, I need to investigate the history of the art form, keeping in mind what's asked of me, I need to do my research, and evolve what I find. Art is not a stable thing; it always changes and evolves. We take the ideas that our elders worked on, and we improve on them further, and in the future, that evolution will remain and change the art form even more. And in that way, we are working and giving new ideas, to reach a better art form, that we can currently see and appreciate, and which the viewers, and for me, the worshipers that are going to their mosques are convinced with the words they are seeing, and feel at home, in the house of Allah.

Mona Abou Sleiman: I would like to thank you first for being here with us, I would also like to thank you for the passion you put into your work in all your mosques. It truly is a beautiful art-form.

THE REST OF THE CLIP DOES NOT RELATE TO MR. HAROUT.

*True and accurate translation of the attached text written in Arabic. Translator is officially accredited to translate by the Ministry of Justice, decree no. 1483, on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Translated on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023*





## Interview Transcript

Interview on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015, at MBC Studios, for the TV show "كلام نراعيم" (Talk of the Town). Interview first broadcasted on the show on the same day, then uploaded online on MBC's official website (<https://www.mbc.net/channels/mbc1>) before it was archived, currently found on <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=569005964182591&ref=sharing>

0 mins 10 secs: (موسيقى البرنامج) (تصقيف)

خطي: رانيا برغوت

22 secs:

رانيا برغوت: من اللافت أنو نشوف مهندس غير مسلم يعشق تصميم المساجد الإسلامية. هذه هي حال المهندس الداخلي اللبناني هاروت بسته جيان، الذي يعتبر مبدع في فنّ تصميم وزخرفة أهمّ المساجد في الشرق الأوسط، الولايات المتحدة، وأفريقيا. شو آلي جذبه لهيدا الفنّ، وشو لي أعطى بحياته؟ خلينا نشوف.

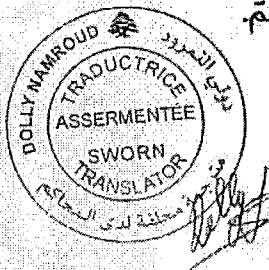
(بدئ الربورتاج)

صوت: إمتلك الحسّ الفنّي بالأشكال والألوان منذ الصّغر، الأمر الذي دفعه إلى أن يكون مصمّمًا وفنّانًا متميّزًا، حتّى أنّه حاز سريعًا على الإعجاب والتقدير لعمله المتقن في تصميم أهمّ المساجد في الشرق الأوسط، الولايات المتحدة، وأفريقيا.

هاروت: دارس التزيين الداخلي وتخصّصت في المساجد. أول مسجد عملته هو مسجد بهاء الدّين الحريري في صيدا، ومن وقتها صار تركيزي بس المساجد، ولحديد هلق صرت عامل 35 قبة ونصف قبة بعدد كبير من المساجد حول العالم وبلبنان.

خطي: هاروت بسته جيان - مهندس داخلي ومصمّم مساجد

هاروت: من بعد ما عملت أول مسجد، صار عندي تعلّق كثير قويّ بالفنّ الإسلامي، بتفصيل الزخرفة والكتيبة وكل شيء يختصّ بالفنّ الإسلامي وبالمساجد، وكملت بهيدا الإتّجاه، وكان عندي نجاح كثير مهمّ.



صوت: البداية كانت عن طريق الصدفة حينما قام في تصميم أول مسجد. لكنّ المشروع تميّز وكان موائماً للمميّزات الهندسيّة والجذور العمرانيّة والتاريخيّة. فقدّم عمله مزخرفاً وجماليّاً، لتتبعه مشاريع أخرى كثيرة، كان آخرها تصميم مسجد الرفاعيّ في جنوب لبنان.

هاروت: بهيدا المسجد هون، بمسجد إمام الرفاعيّ في صور، اشتغلنا بالآيات القرآنيّة الموجودة بالقبة، وبال Mezanine ، وتعتيق الحيطان، الترخيم، وزخرفات إسلاميّة، والتذهيب، وكل التفاصيل اليّ عم نشوفا موجودة، والشباب عم يشتغلوا ورانا.

صوت: فما الذي جذبه ل يبقى متخصّصاً في فنّ تصميم المساجد؟

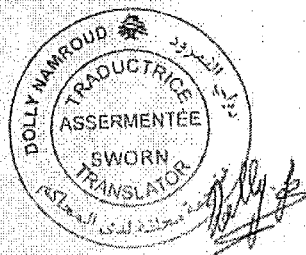
(إنهاء الربورتاج - تصفيق)

رانيا برغوت: هاروت أهلا وسهلا فيك ببرنامجنا، رح ابدأ بالسؤال اليّ هو نهينا فيه الربورتاج، شو اليّ جذبك لفنّ رسم المساجد وتصميمها؟

خطي: هاروت بسته جيان - مهندس داخلي ومصمّم مساجد

هاروت: أول شي ما كان عندي فكرة غير كورسات (courses) قطعوا بالجامعة عن الفنّ الإسلاميّ. كنت شوف هالخطوط بالكلكرافي (calligraphy) بالخط الإسلاميّ، هالخطوط الحلوة وشوفن كرسمة أكثر من كلمات. بس مع الوقت، مع المشاريع اليّ اشتغلتن، صار عندي تعلّق، وشفت إنّو أدّيش في أبعاد وأدّي الواحد بيقدّر يكبر فيها ويطوّر فيها، وحتّى يطوّر الفنّ الإسلاميّ من المرحلة لي نحنا فيها لقّدام، بعد لقّدام.

إلهام وجدي: أنا معك ميّة فالميّة، يعني أنا ما أشوفش أبداً، أنا فتانة تشكيليّة أصلاً دراستي أنا، أنا ما بشوفش أبداً أن الفنّ له ديانة، ولا له أصول، الفنّ فنّ. ألبكقروند تاعك مش إسلاميّ يعني ما عندكش بثقافتك الحروف دي، هل إنت بتزاكر، بتروح



لمراجع معيّنة، تتفهم كيف ترسم الزّي، أو حتّى تفهم أكثر عن ال culture دي،  
بتزاكرها مسلاً أبل ما ترسم دي وتصمّم؟

هاروت: أكيد ولا شي بالحظ. إنّو كل شغلة بدّا دراسة وبدي إرجع بتاريخ الفنّ، بتاريخ  
الفنّ، حسب شو مطلوب مّني بدي أعمل دراستي وطور هالشي. والفنّ مّنو ثابت  
بمطرح معيّن، عطول عم بيتغيّر عم بيتقدّم، ومناخذ الأفكار يّلي أجدادنا اشتغلوا عليّين،  
ومنطوّرنا أكثر، وأكيد بالمستقبل رح يتطور أكثر وأكثر. وبها المرحلة هيدا، عم نشغل،  
عم نعطي أفكار جديدة، تنوصل للأحلى يّلي قادرين هلق نشوفو، وأكيد المشاهدين  
يّلي عم- بالنسبة لإلي المصليّين يّلي عم بفوتو عالمسجد يكونوا مقتنعين بّلي عم  
بشوفون، ويحسّوا حالن ببيتن بيت الله.

منى أبو سليمان: مهندس هاروت أوّل شي نحنا بدنا نشكرك على وجودك معانا، بس  
أيضاً على الهدية الجميلة الّي بتحفظها بامضائك في كلّ المساجد. إنّو فنّ جميل جدّاً.

6 mins 22 secs

باقي الفلم لا علاقة له بعمل هاروت.


I certify that I am fluent in Arabic and the above is an Arabic language transcript of  
Talk of the Town MBC which can be found online at  
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=569005964182591&ref=sharing>

Name: Dolly Fehed

Signature: *Dolly Fehed*


Date: 27/4/2023



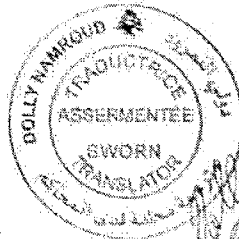
  
Sworn Translator • Traductrice Assermentée  
مترجمة محلفة لدى المحاكم

Mobile +961 76 73 00 72  
e-mail dolytahed61@gmail.com  
Lebanon, Kasrawan,  
Arizona, St. John Street

I certify that this is full, complete and accurate English language translation of the accompanying Arabic language document and that I am competent to translate from Arabic into English.

Name: Dolly Tahed  
Signature:   
Date: 27/4/2023

True and accurate translation of the attached text written in Arabic. Translator is officially accredited to translate by the Ministry of Justice, decree no. 1483, on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017.  
Translated on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023





11/4/21, 3:34 PM

MBC TV - Middle East Broadcasting - Arabic Television - ADVERTISE ON ARABIC MEDIA FOR THE BEST ARABIC MARKET O...



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**MBC TV**

MBC TV INTRODUCTION

HISTORY OF MBC TV

AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

MBC &amp; GLOBAL BRANDS

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POPULAR PROGRAMS

SATELLITE COVERAGE

MBC 2

MBC 3

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MBC DRAMA

MBC MAX

DIGITAL ADVERTISING

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FOOD

CARS

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**MBC: MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING CENTER****A TEN YEAR HISTORY  
OF EXCELLENCE**

A Ten Year Pioneer, MBC is the leading free-to-air, pan-Arab, news and entertainment channel. MBC's guiding philosophy has always been to lead and innovate. Satellite transmission first started from London in September 1991, making MBC the first-ever, independent Arabic satellite TV station and a market leader, delivering news and quality, family entertainment programming to more than 130 million Arabic speaking people around the world. MBC has recently moved its headquarters to Dubai Media City, enabling the whole production process to be closer to its Arab viewers. The centre has been described as one of the new wonders of the satellite transmission world.

MBC is constantly building on its core strengths to add new dimensions in an ever changing and competitive world of broadcast in the Middle East. All this has led to MBC becoming the most effective pan-Arab medium to link advertisers with Arab-American consumers.

MBC has successfully launched two brand new free-to-air channels, offering 24-hour news and entertainment to the Arab world. '2' is an entertainment movie channel, and Al Arabiya, a 24hour News Channel. Established in 1991, MBC TV has pioneered the media revolution in the Middle East. MBC TV is an accurate representation of the Arabic culture in all its forms and shapes with the objective to fulfill people's interests and desires by offering them high quality and exclusive programs.

**INNOVATIVE  
PROGRAMMING**

MBC is committed to delivering the best in TV entertainment. This has repeatedly and consistently reinforced the company's commitment to producing programs that are by far the most diverse, interesting and unique in the region. The station's sustainable success in the Middle East is also evidence of their competitive advantage. MBC News retains its position as the Middle East's most credible and trusted source of news. It is regarded as number one provider of Gulf, national and sports news. MBC is equally renowned for its wide range of quality Arabic and Western films/series. Furthermore, MBC's acquisition of global brands, such as the Warner Brothers movies, emphasizes MBC's greater advantage over the pay per view and other subscription based operators in the region.

- MBC is dedicated to bringing its audiences the latest and most informative news from around the world the moment it happens. Stimulating current affairs programs also discuss and debate in-depth hot issues drawn from current events.
- MBC constantly brings to its children viewers new and exciting global brands, including the wide range of Disney cartoons.
- MBC's professional and quality coverage approach of worldwide sports events, such as the World Cup and the Olympics, highlights its commitment to sports. MBC's main focus however remains on the major sports tournaments and competitions throughout the Middle East and the Gulf regions.
- MBC continues its success in delivering original and innovative Arabic language television programs. From gripping controversial dramas such as "Al Hur Al Ein", to entertaining comedies such as "Tash Ma Tash."

**AUDIENCE  
DEMOGRAPHICS**

MBC's Arabic viewers have one thing in common, they represent the different and diverse aspects



11/4/21, 3:34 PM

MBC TV - Middle East Broadcasting - Arabic Television - ADVERTISE ON ARABIC MEDIA FOR THE BEST ARABIC MARKET O...

and values of the Arabic family, wherever it is in the world. Consequently, MBC has preserved and strengthened the well-established bond between the programs, audiences and advertisers.

## ADVERTISE ON MBC

Through Allied Media, MBC TV is tapping you into an important market: The affluent Arab and Arab-American consumer living in the United States and worldwide. To reach this expanding market, MBC TV's Institutional Services Group is working to deliver MBC TV programming to:

- Hotels and Resorts worldwide: Both groups find that the availability of MBC TV's news and its programming serves as an important sales tool in marketing their services to travelers from the Arab world.
- Hospitals: MBC TV's Arabic-language cartoons and films, as well as its news programs, offer a comforting sense of home to individuals who may have come from the Arab World seeking medical treatment.
- Universities: MBC is an important asset to Middle East related studies, international politics programs, and to international students.
- Government: Government officials and political scientists have already recognized that they can depend on MBC TV for the latest unbiased news from the Arab World.

Benefits of advertising on MBC include:

Specific targeting of various Arabic audiences in the Middle East, particularly in Saudi Arabia guarantees a well identified target audience.

MBC has an extensive media coverage and reach.

- Successful association of brands with high quality programs and news.
- Competitive advertising and marketing packages through Allied Media.
- MBC's structured ad breaks provide more efficiency for the advertiser.
- Simply, it re-affirms MBC's position as the leading Pan Arab station.

### MBC TV ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

For MBC TV Advertising Rate Card and Marketing Kit

Tel: +1 703 333 2008

email: [mbc@allied-media.com](mailto:mbc@allied-media.com)

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Allied Media Corp.  
McLean, VA 22101

[MBCTV@allied-media.com](mailto:MBCTV@allied-media.com)



## Arab American National Museum

13624 Michigan Ave., Dearborn, Michigan 48126 | 313.429.2535 | [www.arabamericanmuseum.org](http://www.arabamericanmuseum.org)

April 18, 2023

To Whom it May Concern,

As previously stated, I am the Director of the Arab American National Museum (AANM), which is the only institution in the United States that documents, preserves and presents the history, culture, and contributions of Arab Americans. Located in Dearborn, Michigan, amid the largest concentration of Arab Americans in the nation, AANM currently displays a piece of artwork created and donated by Mr. Bastajian in the main courtyard of our museum. It is a masterful example of Arabesque design, an intricate and complex decorative element found throughout the Arab world, and it is prominently positioned immediately over and behind a display on art in Arab history.

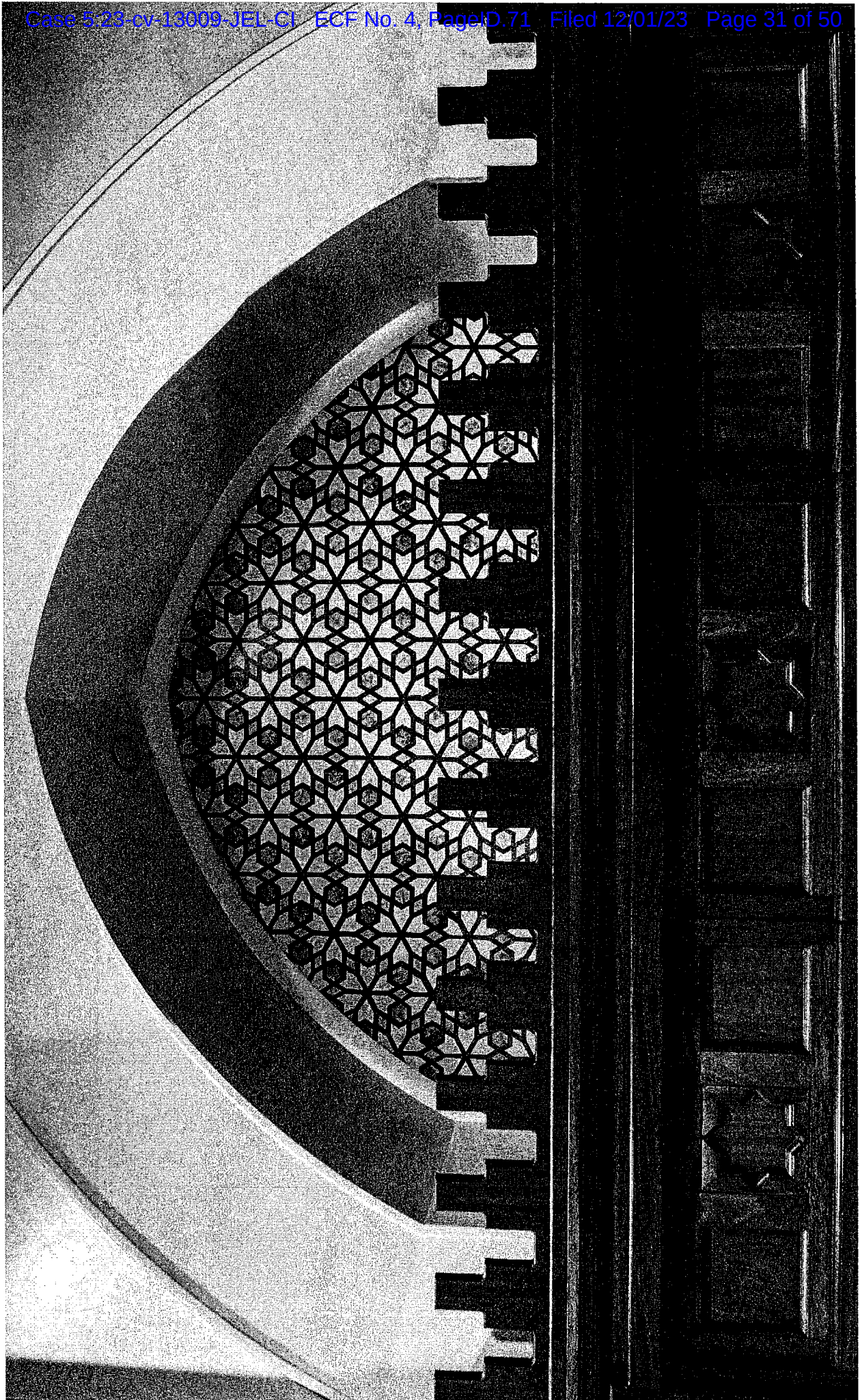
Based upon my experience as a museum director I affirm that Mr. Bastajian's art is displayed in a manner consistent with, and for the purpose of, artistic exhibitions. I enclose with this letter photographs of the display of his artwork together with its immediate context.

Sincerely,

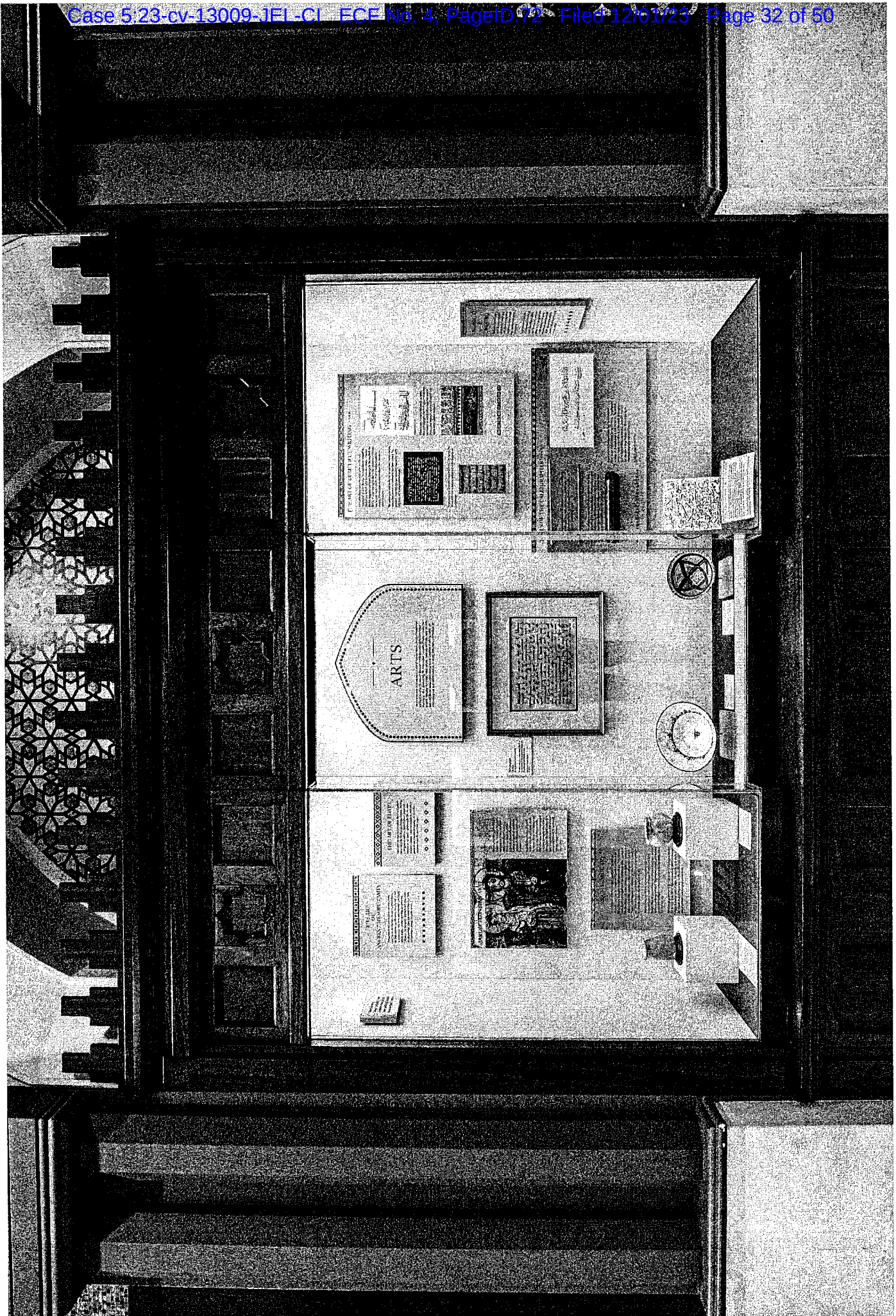
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diana Abouali", written in a cursive style.

Diana Abouali, PhD  
Director







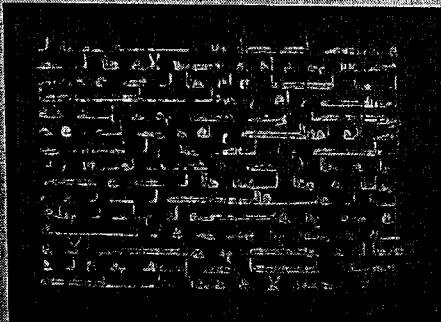




## THE ART OF BEAUTIFUL WRITING >>>>

In the Arab-Islamic world, the calligrapher was the most venerated of all artists. Because the angel Gabriel revealed the Word of God to the Prophet Muhammad in Arabic, it became the Holy Language and the only language for the Holy Book, the Qur'an. A scribe copying the Qur'an thus performed a pious act and his goal was to make the Word of God as beautiful as possible. Different styles of script developed from the wish to adorn the Qur'an.

The earliest script used for the Qur'an was kufic, named after the town in Iraq where it was believed to have been created. The geometric, horizontal style was considered appropriate for the Holy Book and its long parchment pages.



When paper was introduced from China in the 10th century, the format of the Qur'an became vertical and scribes began to use cursive scripts.



Muhaqqaq

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Nashki

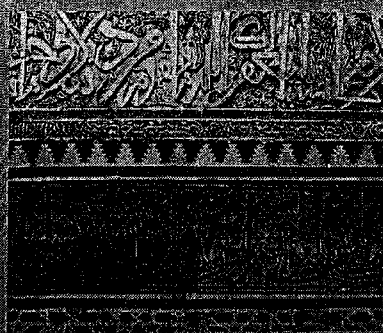
مَا نَذَرْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا

Thuluth

أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِمَّنْ بَدَلَتْ

Arabic calligraphy: Muhaqqaq, Nashki, Thuluth

Different styles of writing had specific purposes: clear and balanced scripts for business transactions and treaties, or more invaluable elaborate styles for poetry. Large impressive types of calligraphy were used to adorn religious structures.



Arabic calligraphy: Thuluth



# ARTS

The arts of the Arab world represent a wealth of traditions including the art of Mesopotamia and Egypt as well as Christian and Islamic art. Artistic decoration adorned architectural structures as well as objects of daily life. Artists worked in a variety of media, including the sculpture, manuscript illumination, mosaic, ceramic, metalwork, and textile. Today, art in the Arab world flourish as many artists continue to work in traditions of painting, pottery, and embroidery as well as in modern media such as canvas, photography, and installation art.





19500 Ford Road | Dearborn, MI 48128 | (313) 593-0000

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Dear US Citizenship and Immigration Services,

**Re: Haroutioun Bastajian**

Harout Bastajian played an unequivocally critical role in the design, execution and opening of the Islamic Center of America in Dearborn, MI. At the onset, as a Board, we were struggling to find an individual or a company both domestic and abroad with the experience and talent necessary to aid us in our pursuit of building the largest mosque in North America.

The uniqueness of what we were attempting to accomplish was continuously met with rejection from domestic artists and designers. It was apparent that no one we met with could do what we needed. It was a requirement for us to hire someone with specific experience with large-scale mosques. Enter our esteemed solution, Harout Bastajian.

Through our extensive global network, we were introduced to Harout Bastajian. In 2006, A few Board members flew to Beirut, Lebanon to meet with Harout as they endeavored to persuade him to accept our role in leading the execution of all interior artwork. The team came to the unanimous conclusion that Harout Bastajian is the leading mosque decorator in the world. Although in extreme demand, we were able to convince him to travel to the United States in 2008 and prioritize work on our project.

Harout's responsibilities were abundant, yet specific. He led the execution of all artwork, calligraphy and patina in the hallways, prayer rooms, banquet halls, interior doors, walls, soffits, domes, mezzanine, etc., His leadership included teams of skilled artists, painters, calligraphers and volunteers. Upon completion of this work, we, the Board of Directors at the Islamic Center of America, presented to Harout a distinguished honor for which he shared with only the leading 4 or 5 individuals who were responsible with the completion of our historic mosque. His plaque hangs in our hall of honor.

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald J. Amen".

**Ron Amen**

Former Chairman, Executive Board  
Islamic Center of America



STUDENT LIFE

# MULTI-ETHNIC STUDENT AFFAIRS

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Dr. Nadia Bazy and I serve as the Director of Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs at the University of Michigan. Our office coordinates Heritage Month programming throughout the year for the institution bringing together faculty, staff, and students. This year's theme for Arab Heritage Month was *Our Origins*. We were honored to bring Harout Bastajian to our campus on Tuesday April 4, 2023 as part of our month of programming.

Our campus community was excited to have an art workshop by a world renowned decorative artist like Mr. Bastajian. The ability to bring in one of the world's most talented artists in his field of mosque decoration, or arguably the most talented here in the US and abroad was a unique moment on our campus. The students were able to have hands-on artistic experience with no prior skills needed and engaged in learning techniques such as gilding, patina, wood/marble/stone imitation, washes, technical painting, design prep and more from an artist who is at the top of his field globally and our first exposure here in the US to such artistic talent. They were also able to learn about Mr. Bastajin work in the US, Europe, Middle East and Africa.

This event was a particular point of pride for our office as it reflected a continued relationship and partnership with Mr. Bastajian. He was the artist who created the mural in the Edward Said lounge which is housed in our North Quad dorm at the University of Michigan. To bring Mr. Bastajian back after students have had the chance to have their programs, meetings, and social events in the lounge was a true gift for our community. While at the Arab Unity Ball which was put on by our Arab Student Association and supported 17 other organizations, the students referenced how having the Edward Said lounge was essential to their programming and sense of belonging on campus. That reflection paired alongside a co-curricular activity like the art workshop helps to create meaningful relationships and events on campus for students to explore identity and art in a contemporary context. I'm happy to discuss further and look forward to a continued partnership with Mr. Bastajian.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Nadia Bazy'. The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Dr. Nadia M. Bazy  
Director  
Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs  
University of Michigan



**LIGHT U.S.A**  
DECORATIVE ART WORKS



Dear USCIS,

Please receive this letter as reference and evidence of the incredible impact that Harout Bastajian has made on the Detroit community and abroad. As a managing member of Light USA and AF Inc, I have had the distinct privilege in working with Harout daily since his arrival in the US. Aside from his unparalleled ability to design and execute mosque art; his outstanding character, work ethic and family values are really what set him apart.

Through my experience in business both at the Fortune 10 level as well as an entrepreneur - it is rare to come across someone with such a remarkable ability that is so evidently needed. Plain and simple, Harout is the best mosque decorator currently residing in the United States of America. We were on a search for such a talent for a long time, but continuously came up short. There is a large demand and need by churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, etc.. in America for an artist with the experience, aptitude and creativity that would satisfy their needs. We came to realize this unmet demand, and as a result, located Harout Bastajian.

Now that Harout is in the US, he is being approached by many religious, commercial and academic institutions to execute custom artwork in their places of worship, businesses, universities and even personal residences. Since 2021, Harout has been a critical leader of our organization in our efforts to satisfy the communities we serve amongst others. He is the leading designer, artist, relationship manager and sourcing expert for Light USA and AF Inc. Without Harout's expertise and capability, Light USA and AF Inc would not exist as it does today. The organization can only be successful if Harout is leading our team. Moreover, every time Harout is engaged in a new project for a client – he is hired to lead the entire team from design to execution.

As of May 2023, Harout has prearranged commitments to work on projects in the United States for the next 36 months and beyond. We have signed contracts and enthusiastic clients who have their entire communities fundraising to ensure they are able and ready for Harout to begin working on their respective institutions. To deny them this commitment would not only disrupt their ability to complete their project – but also our ability to be successful as an organization.

In conclusion, it is my honor to recommend that Harout and his family be approved with EB-1 status and allowed to stay in the United States to carry out his dream and continue to serve the US market for whom have explicitly showcased their immediate need for Harout's unique and extraordinary ability to decorate a broad spectrum of establishments.

Thank you,  
Michael

*Michael Makki*

**Michael Makki**

Managing Director, Village Private Equity  
Managing Member, Light USA and AF Inc  
PO Box 715 Dearborn Heights, MI 48127  
313.574.9936 | [michael@villagepe.com](mailto:michael@villagepe.com)  
[www.villagepe.com](http://www.villagepe.com)





## Lebanese International Business Council

30100 Telegraph Rd., Suite 170, Bingham Farms, MI 48025

June 1st, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

As chairman of the Board of Directors of The Islamic Center of America in 2006, I led our board in its search for local and national artists to help with the decorative Islamic Arts designs and calligraphy of our newly built mosque in Dearborn, Michigan. The ICA had the distinction of being the largest mosque in North America. We found it impossible to find anyone locally or nationwide who can lead this project.

I was visiting Beirut, Lebanon that summer, where I learned about the landmark Al-Amine Mosque that was recently completed in downtown Beirut. That mosque would become to be known as the Blue Mosque of the Middle East. It boasted a 12-story high dome and lavish religious decorations. I made it my mission to meet with the mosque planners and specifically asked about the remarkable artist who designed and structured the Islamic Artwork of its impressive domes.

To my surprise, I was informed that a young Non-Muslim Artist, Mr. Harout Bastajian was the person in charge of decorating the huge domes and executing different art works and calligraphy throughout that mosque. I was very impressed with his unique knowledge and experience in that intricate and sophisticated art field.

As for the Islamic Center of America, Harout was our natural choice to spearhead our project here in the United States. I was humbled by the board's decision to accept our recommendation and assign Harout the formidable task of designing and executing all the Islamic Arts work throughout our mosque's interior including its huge dome. I was blessed to be able to cover most of the expenses required to complete that project.

We are lucky to have Harout once again, here with us in Dearborn, as he continues to share his unique talent at the ICA and other places of worship, similar to what he did in 2008. He's currently involved in a major overhaul and decorating of all our assembly and banquet hall rooms with Islamic Arts designs and calligraphy. I'm humbly covering expenses associated with this latest project at the ICA as a token of support to our mosque and to Harout's formidable artwork.

Please don't hesitate to contact me regarding this letter of support for Harout. His artwork will be a testimony to his unique artistic talents and a platform of harmony among people of faith for generations to come.

Sincerely,

  
Dr. Nassib Fawaz  
President of the Lebanese International Business Council.

T : 7 3 4 - 3 5 4 - 2 0 0 0 • M : + 1 - 3 1 3 - 5 2 9 - 7 9 9 9

w w w . L I B C . n e t

*Exhibit B at 26*





Subject: Recommendation for Haroutioun Bastajian

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to provide an official recommendation for Mr. Haroutioun Bastajian to support his immigration application. I am familiar with Mr. Bastajian's exceptional skills and the valuable contributions he can make to the field of art and design through his association with Zaman International.

Zaman International is a highly reputable non-profit organization that is committed to facilitating change and advancing the lives of marginalized women and children, by enabling them to meet essential needs common to all humankind. They have played a pivotal role in the fight to end multigenerational poverty. Mr. Bastajian's commitment to Zaman International allows them to continue increase their efforts to reach their noble goal.

Mr. Bastajian's work as an artist holds significant importance in the realm of art and design. His artistic techniques and expertise in designing mosque domes and church domes have garnered worldwide recognition. His innovative and captivating designs have contributed to the cultural enrichment of numerous communities globally. Mr. Bastajian's ability to create iconic structures demonstrates his exceptional artistic talent, which has the potential to further enhance the art landscape in the United States.

Mr. Bastajian will undoubtedly make significant contributions to Zaman International and the broader community. His presence and mentorship to Zaman's clients will allow them to use art to empower themselves and support their families. Furthermore, his unique artistry and technical expertise will greatly benefit those who seek to learn, create, and market their products under Zaman International's guidance.

I have had the privilege of witnessing Mr. Bastajian's commitment to his craft and his dedication to sharing his skills with others. His willingness to mentor aspiring artists, coupled with his passion for fostering cultural understanding through art, sets him apart as an exceptional individual. I am confident that Mr. Bastajian's talent, combined with his desire to serve and uplift others, will make him an invaluable asset to both Zaman International and the United States.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly recommend the immigration application for Mr. Haroutioun Bastajian. His unique artistic abilities, particularly in the design of mosque and church domes, highlight his extraordinary talent and potential to contribute to the cultural fabric of our nation. Granting him the opportunity to work

hope for humanity

☎ (313) 551-3994  
📠 (313) 633-1211

26091 Trowbridge St., Inkster, MI 48141  
[zamaninternational.org](http://zamaninternational.org)

Zaman International is a Non-Profit Humanitarian 501(C)3 Organization EIN: 20-1946065

***Exhibit B at 27***



with Zaman International will undoubtedly result in numerous artistic achievements, benefiting not only the organization but also the American community at large.

Should you require any additional information or have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Najah Bazy  
Founder & CEO  
Zaman International - Hope for Humanity  
Michiganian of the Year 2020  
Crain's Top 100 Most Influential Women 2021  
Michigan Women's Hall of Fame 2020  
CNN Hero 2019

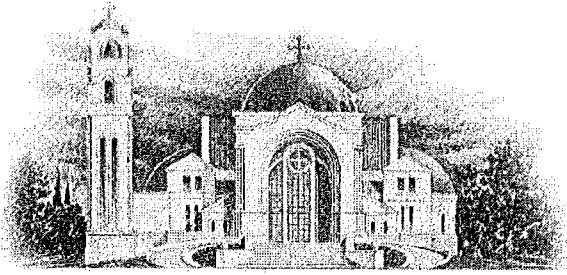
hope for humanity

(313) 551-3994  
(313) 633-1211

26091 Trowbridge St., Inkster, MI 48141  
[zamaninternational.org](http://zamaninternational.org)

Zaman International is a Non-Profit Humanitarian 501(C)3 Organization EIN: 20-1946065

*Exhibit B at 28*



THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX  
BASILICA OF ST. MARY

June 2, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am the V. Rev. Fr. George Shalhoub. I've been the head priest of St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church in Livonia, Michigan since its inception in 1972. Thanks to generosity of the faithful, we grew from a one room church to one of the largest Antiochian Orthodox churches in North America. Currently, our Basilica of St. Mary continues to be a place of religious harmony and spiritual guidance to thousands of parishioners.

I personally oversaw this tiered expansion first in 1977 and then in 1991 when both a convention center and a liturgy covenant became permanent features of our church. I continue to be inspired by the faithful and the glory of God's Creations. The continued expansions of our church dictated specialized Byzantine depictions of our Saints and religious icons.

Nine months ago, we were experiencing a real challenge in finishing the final phase of adding religious calligraphy in both Arabic and Roman lettering in our Basilica. We couldn't find a skillful artist to combine both languages and produce a seam-less final product. Fate would then send our way a brilliant artist from Lebanon who has a stellar reputation both in church and mosque decorations and arts designs. Our beloved son, Mr. Harout Bastajian offered his services and gave us the exact calligraphy and designs needed for our project. To that end, St Mary's Church is eternally grateful for his amazing and unique talents.

I am an immigrant myself. I believe in the sanctity of the human spirit and the talents of new immigrants and their immense contributions in shaping our nation's future. Mr. Bastajian no doubt afforded the opportunity, will become an outstanding citizen and a shepherd of goodwill.

Therefore, I unequivocally support his petition to become a future United States citizen. This world needs more good people like Harout. He has my ultimate respect. I pray for a positive outcome to his INS petition. May God guide this process. May God bless Harout and his family.

In His Service,

  
Fr. George Shalhoub

Under the Jurisdiction of the Antiochian Orthodox Church of America  
18100 Merriman Road, Livonia, Michigan 48152 (734) 422-0010  
Father George H. Shalhoub, Pastor  
Email: theBasilica@TBOSM.com  
Website: www.saintmarylivonia.com



***Exhibit B at 29***



960 Morse Road  
Columbus, OH 43229



Office 614.848.9999  
Fax 614.844.4429  
TwinsBuickGMC.com

Dear USCIS case officer of Harout Bastajian  
My name is Ty Safaryan (Owner of Twins Buick GMC.)  
Office 614.848.9999  
Fax 614.844.4429 TwinsBuickGMC.com

I'm at the final stages of building my dream home in Columbus, Ohio. I have worked for years on the architecture and landscaping designs of this project which includes numerous statues of historical figures and details of art that portrays my Armenian Heritage.

One of the challenges I've encountered during this process was to find a specialized muralist to reproduce a painting of the world renowned artist Ivan Aivazovsky; this specific painting "The Decent of Noah" had mystic mountains in the clouds and flowing waters with the reflection of the sky and light. It was impossible to find an artist to overtake this project with intricate and complicated color schemes. I was lucky to meet Mr. Harout Bastajian at a special event, the reveal of the "Tree of Life" mural produced by Harout at the Jewish Community Center in Canton, Ohio. I was so impressed by both his skills, remarkable art work and his outstanding abilities to portray the flow of different colors and layers.

The great painter Aivazovsky once said: "No one can paint or reproduce an Aivazovsky like Aivazovsky." I presented this challenge to Harout knowing full well he could handle this project. It took him two days to complete this 165 square foot mural with its exact details. I was mesmerized by his abilities to visualize and paint different layers of colors and bring out this masterpiece. Needless to say, my family and I were very pleased and excited to have commissioned the one and only artist who was able to deliver a very complicated, yet remarkable art piece.

As a proud immigrant myself who has worked hard and lives the American dream, I believe that Harout with his unique style and knowledge in the arts is a true asset to the United States of America. He is a renowned international artist and has no limitation to become a successful and contributing member of our great society. If you have any questions, you may reach me at the office at 614-848-9999 ext 3000 or my personal cell, 614-989-5287.

Yours Truly

T V-So

TySafaryan,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ty Safaryan".

Owner of Twins Buick GMC

# UPLIFTING OHIO, SAVING THE *World*

8/8/2022

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Harout Bastajian's application for extended citizenship in the United States of America. Harout is a spectacular contribution to society with extraordinary artistic talents.

Kitchen of Life is a non-profit organization out of the Columbus, OH area aimed at using food to teach students resiliency and how to overcome adversities. Kitchen of Life participants are a part of "a program that offers a creative and welcoming space where teenagers from all backgrounds can gain new skills in culinary arts while being granted access to the life-enhancing tenets of social emotional learning and connectedness." Simply put, we are combatting mental health issues with cooking!

Our team had the distinct pleasure of being luckily introduced to Harout so that we could hire him to travel from Detroit to Columbus to implement some of the critical artistic pieces necessary for our grand opening on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. Aside from his unparalleled execution, our time with Harout was wonderful to say the least. Harout is a stand-up gentleman who embodies the tenets of what being an American is all about. Compassion, humility, work ethic and kindness are some adjectives I would use to describe my interactions with Harout Bastajian. I have introduced him to a few other community members that would like to hire him to work and I will definitely be reaching out to him soon again. I am simply unable to find someone to do what Harout can do.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me @ (614) 570-0019 or via email at [areyahk613@gmail.com](mailto:areyahk613@gmail.com)

Thank you,

*Areyah*  
Rabbi Areyah Kaltmann  
Chabad Columbus  
Executive Director, LifeTown and Kitchen of Life

*Thank you!*



## Unlocking a World of Opportunity

LifeTown Lessons for Life

6220 E. Dublin Granville Rd. New Albany, Ohio 43054

**Exhibit B at 31**



4/20/23, 9:46 AM

Islamic Center of America receives artist's gift, helped during hard times

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# Islamic Center of America receives artist's gift and, in a twist of fate, was helped during hard times

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4/20/23, 9:46 AM

Islamic Center of America receives artist's gift, helped during hard times

"I have 42 domes and half domes I have executed," said artist Harout Bastajian, including the dome in the largest mosque on the North American continent— Dearborn's Islamic Center of America.

Posted at 6:00 PM, Apr 13, 2023 and last updated 11:38 PM, Apr 13, 2023

DEARBORN, Mich. (WXYZ) — "I have 42 domes and half domes I have executed," said artist Harout Bastajian, including the dome in the largest mosque on the North American continent— Dearborn's Islamic Center of America.

Harout Bastajian is the decorative artist behind this masterpiece— he's Armenian from Lebanon — is a specialist in Islamic art and happens to be Christian.

WXYZ's Ameera David asked, "They call you the 'Michaelangelo of Mosques'. How do you feel about that?"

"Michaelangelo, he's of another level," Bastajian responded as he laughed.

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4/20/23, 9:46 AM

Islamic Center of America receives artist's gift, helped during hard times

Equally modest as he is talented the institution's founding members reached out to Bastajian still in debt from the mosque's construction — as the US economy was plummeting.

“A lot of home foreclosures, businesses closing down, money a little bit tight,” said Adnan Chirri, Board of Trustee member of the Islamic Center of America.

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Bringing the dome to life would cost about \$200,000 in total.

“My wife Wanda said, ‘We don’t have the money right now - when we have the money, we will contact you,” said Allie Fayz, Founding member of the Islamic Center of America.

Never did Allie Fayz imagine Harout would instead contact them- and offer to do the months-long project for free.

“You know we have to thank God for every breath we take,” said Bastajian.

For Bastajian a way to give back- as thanks for life's blessings.

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“It meant a lot to us,” said Fayz.

For this Muslim community, the act of kindness from a Christian artist—overwhelming.

“I mean you really can’t have a better gift from God,” said Chirri.

Harout would return to Lebanon – but twelve years later, in a twist of fate, he would fall on his own hard times.

“The financial system collapsed. And like, all our money is gone,” said Bastajian.

Lebanon was in political & economic turmoil, but Fayz, who now treats Harout like a son, couldn’t believe what he heard.

“He said, Allie, I cannot tell you how I feel because I cannot put my kids in school,” said Fayz.

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That's when mosque members sprang into action helping to give the father of 6 - the chance to rebuild.... In the same mosque built in part on his generosity.

"This is really intricate," said David.

"Yeah, this will be inside the banquet hall soon," said Bastajian.

Today, Bastajian rebuilding with paid work - creating memories with a family immensely grateful for a second chapter.

"What has that meant for you?" asked David.

"It means a lot," said Bastajian. "I can't describe it."

Art can describe what words can't. Deep between the curves of this calligraphy...is a full-circle tale, a reminder that today's kindness can create tomorrow's gratitude.

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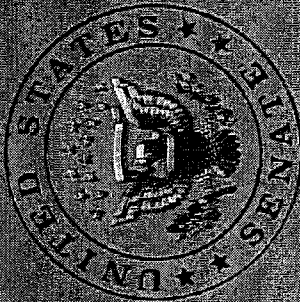
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*Certificate of Special  
Senatorial Recognition*


*Presented to:*

**Mr. Harout Bastajian**

*In recognition of your continued leadership, dedication, and  
service to our community.*

*April 26, 2023*

*Dated*

  
*Senator Gary C. Peters  
Michigan*





19500 Ford Road  
Dearborn, MI 48128  
(313) 593-0000

04/14/2023

Re: Mr Harout Bastagian

Director,

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services

Dear Director,

The Islamic Center of America is the largest mosque in North America and one of its oldest institutions. It is recognized throughout Michigan and outside the State of Michigan as a religious landmark due to its unique architecture and its marvelous calligraphy. Its Board of Trustees insisted on a unique, American architecture different from Middle Eastern, Persian, Turkish or North African mosques.

Over the years, Washington has recognized the Islamic Center of America for its religious, educational and public programs and as a place of moderate patriotic views and positive influence on our society here and abroad. Communications and relationship with the ICA began with President Jimmy Carter's Administration during the hostage crisis and continued with most White House Administrations thereafter every time issues and crises erupt in the Middle East. The ICA hosted US Senators, US Presidents' advisors and envoys as well as delegations from the German Federal Parliament.

In the past and for a decade, the US State Department and National Defense University brought yearly over 70 officers delegates from all over the world to the Islamic Center of America to marvel at the unique architecture and calligraphy and to learn, dialogue and get their questions answered. In addition, The ICA hosts weekly delegates from schools, universities, and interfaith from within and outside the State of Michigan, Canada and the United Kingdom.



Farid Nasser, MD  
Chairman, Board of Trustees  
The Islamic Center of America